THEY MAY BE IDOLS, BUT THEY'RE NO SAINTS

METRO TRIES TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF RUMOURS OF FEUDING ON THE SET OF AMERICAN IDOL PAGE 7

SASKATOON metro®

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

News worth sharing.

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Atleo takes medical leave

Idle, on doctor's orders. Aboriginal affairs minister says chief's illness will not derail talks

A sudden medical leave announced Monday by the head of Canada's largest aboriginal organization will delay — but not derail — pivotal talks between First Nations and Stephen Harper, says Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan.

In an interview with The Canadian Press, Duncan said there's little hope a one-on-one meeting between Harper and Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo can still take place by Jan. 24 — a date that was floated during their meetings last week.

The two leaders had agreed to talk to their respective teams and regroup soon in order to set out a concrete plan to implement the agreements reached on re-examining ancient treaties and aboriginal rights.

Duncan said backroom work on the agreements reached last Friday will continue as planned.

"No one has got certainty for when the national chief will return, but I took it that it would be at least two weeks away," Duncan said. "But we were thinking ... it would be at least that long before any further meeting got underway."

Atleo announced Monday that his doctor has ordered him to take a "brief" sick leave despite the AFN being in the midst of a political crisis, with some chiefs and First Nations citizens questioning the group's authority.

Atleo said the meetings and frustrations over the past two weeks simply caught up with him.

Atleo has been the target of much criticism from other chiefs and First Nations people for agreeing to meet with the prime minister last week. After a week of intense meetings, Atleo managed to pull together a consensus on what topics the meeting should address. But he was not able to persuade Harper to have Gov. Gen. David Johnston attend — a key demand of a faction of chiefs, including fasting Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence.

Several chiefs said the assembly should have refused the meeting, because it didn't take place on their terms and on their turf. Chiefs from Manitoba, Ontario, Northwest Territories and some from Saskatchewan boycotted the meeting and instead protested outside the Prime Minister's Office.

After the meeting, criticism continued to pour in. And Spence insisted on maintaining her liquids-only protest, despite mounting calls for her to declare victory.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Staying healthy

FSIN chief says balance needed amid stress

Perry Bellegarde, chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, said it's just a matter of time before Shawn Atleo is back in his role as the national chief of the AFN.

"He wasn't contagious at the time of the meetings last week, but he was fighting off the flu, so he needs some time to recuperate from that," said Bellegarde Monday afternoon.

"In politics, there's always stress and pressure and it's just how you deal with that. You've got to live a really balanced life, mentally, emotional, spiritual, physical and sometimes you get sick from just a normal flu bug. You've just got to make sure you live a healthy lifestyle so you can battle off all of these different stresses."

MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo addresses a news conference in Ottawa Jan. 10. Atleo says he is taking a "brief" medical leave from his job as national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, under doctor's orders.

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

No crime, no time for Nortel execs

Judge says there wasn't enough evidence that executives did in fact cook the books

PAGE 5

Did Lance drink Oprah's truth serum?

One insider spills the beans on Lance Armstrong's interview with the Queen of Daytime

PAGE 13

Tell me your sign and I'll tell you who paid for dinner

Hoping it will be your year for love? Could be. Check out Match.com's predictions PAGE 11

Budget shortfall

U of S lays off 40 workers, warns more job losses are coming

The University of Saskatchewan is laying off about 40 workers and warns more job losses are coming.

The Saskatoon-based university says the employees will get layoff notices over the next three weeks as the school tries to cope with a big budget shortfall.

It says more job losses are planned for April.

Barb Daigle, associate vice-president of human resources, says the job losses affect unionized and non-unionized employees in administrative and support positions across campus.

The January layoffs are expected to save $2.3 million a year.

The university is projecting a $44.5-million annual deficit by 2016 in its operating budget in which salaries and benefits account for about 75 per cent of total expenses.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Seniors' home

Charges laid after deadly carbon monoxide leak

Officials with a Saskatchewan health region say they are surprised to be facing charges in a carbon monoxide leak that contributed to three deaths at a seniors' home.

The Saskatoon Health Region faces 11 offences under the province's Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Spokeswoman Bonnie Blakley says the region knew charges were possible after gas leaked from a boiler at St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt in December 2010.

A lawyer for the region says it's too early to talk about how the region will plead to the charges.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

North Downtown Master Plan emphasizes community input

Jenna South speaks with media after presenting the community engagement plan to the executive committee on Monday afternoon. JANE CAULFIELD/METRO

Have your say.
Consultations are currently scheduled up to Sept. 9, when the city hopes to present a draft plan to the public

JANE CAULFIELD
jane.caulfield@metronews.ca

As city officials continue to lay the groundwork for the North Downtown Master Plan, they are looking to engage the public in a new way.

"Instead of asking members of the public to come to us, we are going to go to them," said Jenna South, North Downtown Master Plan project manager.

City representatives will have a booth at the annual WinterShines Festival at the Saskatoon Farmer's Market Jan. 25, hosting hourly information sessions and looking for detailed feedback.

The North Downtown Master Plan is a redevelopment project looking to grow the city's centre northward through approximately 240 acres in the central industrial area, ultimately creating a new, sustainable and vibrant neighbourhood. Currently the area is home to mostly rail operations and city storage yards.

"We will talk about the higher-level ideas for the site," said South. "We want to talk to people about what their impression is about the North Downtown site."

Public consultations for the project include meetings with specific community stakeholders and developers, as well as a variety of community engagement meetings for members of the general public.

"We want to make sure we bring in a broad group of both stakeholders and the general public … so anyone who wants to listen in and contribute has an opportunity to do that in a number of different ways," said South.

Consultations are currently scheduled up to Sept. 9, when the city hopes to present a draft plan to the public.

On the web

For more local news, go to metronews.ca

Are we about to get a prairie chinook?

Temperatures in Saskatchewan are set to rise throughout the work week, briefly pulling the province out of an unforgiving winter. Unfortunately the warmth isn't here to stay and temperatures are expected to return to their frigid norm this weekend.

"I think people feel like since December was quite a cold month, so they haven't expected these types of warm-ups," said John Paul Cragg, meteorologist with Environment Canada.

According to Cragg, these mid-winter warm-ups are caused by battling winds trying to control the prairie weather system. Pacific air comes over the Rockies, dropping off moisture in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, while the Arctic air mass brings chilly temperatures.

"It isn't the same process as a chinook would be. A chinook is very localized, but it is warmer pacific air having come over the mountains," said Cragg.

"When the pacific air mass wins, temperatures really increase, then when the arctic air mass moves back in, those temperatures will plummet."

That is why Cragg is warning Saskatchewanians that if snow starts melting this week to be careful on the roads.

"If there are any showers or melting on roadways, because temperatures rise above the 0 C mark, then that precipitation will freeze on roadways, so it could be really slippery driving for the next week," said Cragg.

JEFF MACKEY/METRO IN REGINA

Warming up

- "For Saskatoon we are looking at 2 C for Tuesday, -5 C for Wednesday, back to 2 C on Thursday and -5 C Friday," said John Paul Cragg, meteorologist with Environment Canada.

Bill Morris faces brisk temperatures at Kinsmen Park on Monday afternoon. Outdoor enthusiasts like Morris may be getting a bit of a break from winter weather this week as temperatures are set to rise. JEFF MACKEY/METRO

B.C. court strikes down human-smuggling law

'Unnecessarily broad.' Supreme Court judges say legislation could lead to convictions of humanitarian workers

Canada's human-smuggling law has been struck down by the British Columbia Supreme Court, leaving two high-profile prosecutions in limbo with a judge's advice that the federal government go back to the drawing board.

The decision comes during the defence of four men accused of ferrying dozens of Tamil migrants to B.C.'s west coast in fall 2009.

The ruling also has implications for a second prosecution in connection to a boat of migrants that arrived the following year and any future potential cases of human smuggling.

A publication ban was lifted Monday on the ruling issued Friday by Justice Arne Silverman, who found a section of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act infringes on charter rights because it is "unnecessarily broad."

He said the result could lead to the prosecution of people like humanitarian workers.

As the law stood, a human smuggler was defined as anyone who might "knowingly organize, induce, aid or abet" someone coming to Canada who does not have a visa, passport or other required documentation.

The judge declared section 117 of the act of no force or effect, saying federal politicians now needed to fill the legislative gap.

"This is not the court's job, nor does it have the authority to choose what those priorities are or should be. This is the job of Parliament," Silverman ruled.

Phil Rankin, a lawyer for one of the accused, said he was pleased with the ruling, while noting he anticipates it will be appealed until a decision is delivered by the highest court in the country.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"I've worked with refugees all my life ... Am I an aider and abetter to smuggling? Because the section is so broad (that) perhaps I am."

Lawyer Phil Rankin, who is defending four men accused of smuggling dozens of Tamil migrants into B.C. in 2009.

Gone, but not forgotten

Jimmy Greene kisses his wife, Nelba Marquez-Greene, as he holds a portrait of their daughter, Sandy Hook school shooting victim Ana Marquez-Greene, formerly of Winnipeg, at a news conference at Edmond Town Hall in Newtown, Conn., Monday. One month after the mass school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, the parents joined a grassroots initiative unveiled Monday called Sandy Hook Promise, which supports solutions for a safer community. JESSICA HILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ikea monkey. Lawyer for Darwin's former owner denies abuse allegations

Darwin the Ikea monkey's former owner is firing back at allegations made by the sanctuary where her primate baby currently lives, which include the claim Yasmin Nakhuda and her family physically abused the Japanese macaque.

Ted Charney, Nakhuda's lawyer, wrote in an email that testimony given by two animal-control officers while under oath paints a different picture. He said the two officers said Darwin looked "perfectly fine" when they picked him up after the monkey was found wandering around the parking lot at a Toronto Ikea in early December.

Darwin "was extremely happy to see" Nakhuda when she visited him at Story Book Farm once he was apprehended, and "she was very helpful by changing his diaper and washing him," according to the officers' testimony.

Charney also pointed to the YouTube videos that show Darwin "looking just fine, and reveal a loving relationship."

The comments come in response to a statement of defence filed Thursday by the sanctuary. Nakhuda is suing Story Book Farm and its owner Sherri Delaney in order to get Darwin back.

"Delaney filed an affidavit stating he was fine and she had a psychologist examine him who said he was emotionally fine, no distress at all. There is no evidence of abuse in this case," Charney added.

Yasmin Nakhuda
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The email also addresses Nakhuda's claim that she signed a surrender form so she could see the monkey. According to Charney, the officer said he did not threaten her with criminal charges, "but admitted that he said to her that there were other provincial statutes and implications if she did not sign and he would not let her see Darwin."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Biofuels

Feds mull diesel substitute for navy ships

Before Ottawa goes full steam ahead with an idea to power navy ships with biofuels, it wants to know if the cost of doing so will sink the plan. The federal government is soliciting proposals for how it might use biofuels to replace traditional diesel — assuming the price is right.

The ethanol and biofuels industries have received millions of dollars in funding from the Conservative government over the years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

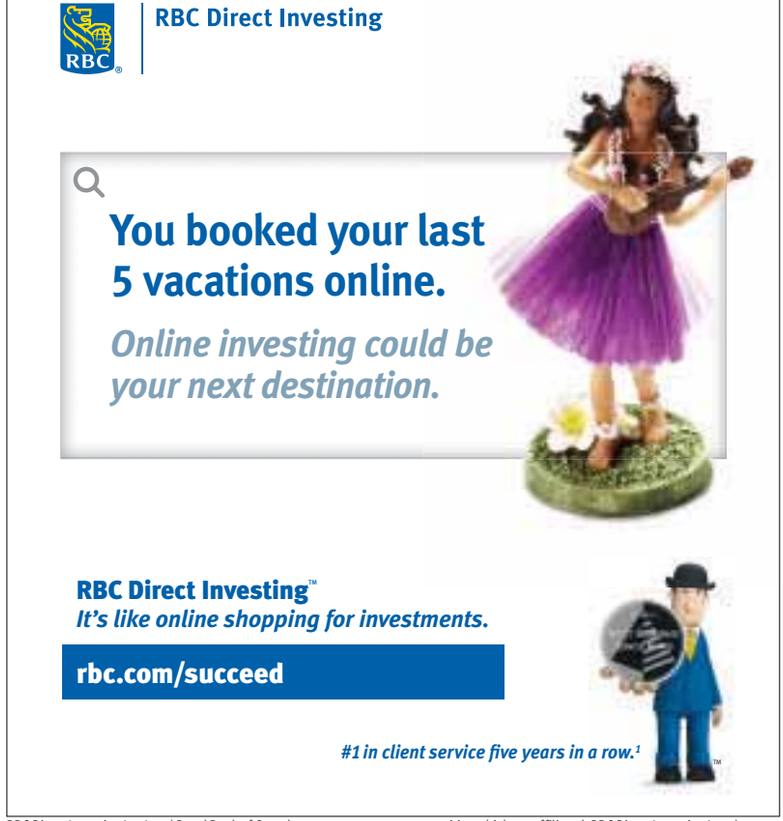
Facebook fling

Kelly files for divorce from Kelly

It took a simple Facebook message from one Kelly Hildebrandt to another Kelly Hildebrandt to get the wheels of love turning.

When the virtual relationship blossomed despite geographical differences — she was from Florida, he from Texas — they became instant celebrities.

But it seems the two are no longer Facebook friends. The young couple filed for divorce in July, according to Broward County, Fla., court records. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE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rbc.com/succeed
#1 in client service five years in a row.[1]

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Canada sends C-17 to help France in Mali, but Harper says no combat for Canadians

Occupation. Military cargo plane sent by Harper as part of African nation is overrun by al-Qaida-linked group

Canada is contributing one of its large C-17 military cargo planes to deliver supplies to the capital of Mali after a request from France.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper insists no Canadian Forces personnel will be involved in any combat action in the landlocked West African country. And he says the transport plane commitment will be short.

An al-Qaida-linked group has seized the northern part of Mali and is advancing south.

The Canadian plane will be used to transport equipment and supplies into the Malian capital of Bamako, which is not in the combat zone.

Canadian involvement

"At no time will Canadian Armed Forces members be participating in direct action against insurgent forces in Mali."
Prime Minister Stephen Harper

France, which began air strikes last week against insurgents in the north, has ordered the immediate evacuation of all French nationals living in the Malian town of Segou.

"There is a serious situation in northern Mali, where there is a large territory now occupied by essentially terrorist entities, who are looking at expanding their influence throughout Africa," Harper said at a Montreal news conference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada is contributing one of its large C-17 military cargo planes, pictured here, to deliver supplies to Mali after a request from France. RICHARD LAM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gearing up to fight terrorism

Sailors carry their gear as HMCS Toronto heads to the Arabian Sea as part of Operation Artemis, in Halifax on Monday. The six-month mission is part of an international campaign against terrorism in the Middle East. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Not a deadbeat nation.' Obama says Congress must act quickly to raise the U.S. debt ceiling

U.S. President Barack Obama demanded on Monday that lawmakers raise the nation's $16.4-trillion federal debt limit quickly, warning that "Social Security benefits and veterans' checks will be delayed" if they don't, and cautioning Republicans not to insist on cuts to government spending in exchange.

"They will not collect a ransom in exchange for not crashing the economy," he said at the 21st and final news conference of his first term. "The full faith and credit of the United States of America is not a bargaining chip. And they better decide quickly because time is running short."

The risk of a default once the debt ceiling is reached dominated the news conference, and Obama treated it as anything but a laughing matter.

"We are not a deadbeat nation," he declared, less than a week away from taking the oath of office for a second term.

Barack Obama THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Answering questions for about an hour, Obama also said he will soon ask Congress to enact new gun-control legislation in the wake of the shootings that left 20 elementary students dead at a Newtown, Conn., school a little more than a month ago.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Italy. Court denies Berlusconi bid to halt pay-for-sex trial

A Milan court on Monday rejected a bid by former premier Silvio Berlusconi to halt his sex-for-hire trial for Italy's general election campaign, a ruling that makes a verdict likely before the February vote.

Berlusconi's lawyer accused the court of "interfering heavily" in the Italian political campaign by refusing to suspend the trial so Berlusconi can dedicate himself to campaigning for his centre-right coalition.

"A verdict will most certainly come before the election. It seems to me this is the clear intent of the court," defence lawyer Niccolo Ghedini told reporters. "It doesn't bother us, but it should bother citizens since it is obvious that it will impact the electoral campaign."

Prosecutors accused Ghedini of merely seeking to delay a verdict in the nearly two-year-old trial, which started when Berlusconi was still in office. He resigned some seven months later, making room for Mario Monti's technical government, as the sovereign debt crisis threatened to engulf Italy.

Despite his legal woe and sex scandal, Berlusconi's centre-right coalition has been gaining in the polls since he actively began campaigning. Berlusconi, 76, also has been boosted by combative televised debates with journalistic critics.

Berlusconi is accused of having paid for sex with a Moroccan woman, Karima el-Mahroug, when she was 17, during racy "bunga bunga" parties with attractive young women at his villa near Milan, and then using his influence to cover it up.

Both he and el-Mahroug, 20, better known as Ruby, have denied sexual relations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Karima el-Mahroug, better known as Ruby, arrives to court in Milan on Monday. STR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

India

Gang-rape suspect claims he's a minor

One of the five men charged with gang-raping and killing a 23-year-old student on a bus in India's capital is a minor, his lawyer said Monday as he demanded an age-determination test in what could be a tactic to delay the case from being tried in a fast-track court.

Manohar Lal Sharma, the lawyer for Mukesh Singh, said at a court hearing that his client is under 18, and that police documents indicating Singh is 26 had been "manipulated."

"If you could just see his face, he is only a child," Sharma told The Associated Press. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin

Bank robbers a bunch of pros

German police say robbers dug a 30-metre tunnel into the safe-deposit room of a Berlin bank and escaped with their haul, setting a fire as they left to cover their tracks.

Berlin police spokesman Thomas Neuendorf says the tunnel led from an underground garage into the bank's safe-deposit room.

Neuendorf said Monday that the tunnel was "very professional" and must have taken weeks or even months to complete.

Police are still trying to determine what valuables were stolen from the deposit boxes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Not guilty ruling 'vindication' for ex-Nortel brass

Fraud trial. Judge says he's not convinced that executives 'deliberately misrepresented' finances at telecom company

The former top executives at Nortel Networks said they finally got "vindication" Monday after being found not guilty of fraud, nearly a decade after being accused of manipulating financial records at the fallen Canadian technology giant.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Frank Marrocco acquitted ex-CEO Frank Dunn, ex-CFO Douglas Beatty and ex-controller Michael Gollogly because he was "not satisfied" the evidence showed the men had "deliberately misrepresented" the finances at the now-defunct telecom company in 2002 and 2003. "The criminal trial is based on evidence," he told a Toronto courtroom. "The decision I make is based on that evidence and nothing else."

Following the not guilty verdicts, the former executives jumped to their feet to hug family members and their lawyers.

Marrocco's 145-page ruling concludes one of the largest and most complex trials in Canadian corporate history.

Dunn, Beatty and Gollogly each had faced two counts of fraud — one count of defrauding the public and one count of defrauding Nortel Networks Corp.

The Crown had alleged that the men participated in a book-cooking scheme designed to trigger $12.8 million in bonuses and stocks for themselves while they were at the helm of Nortel. They were fired from the beleaguered firm in 2004. All three had pleaded not guilty to the charges.

In a statement, Dunn, the former head of Nortel, said he was "grateful to have received vindication."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 101.65¢ (+0.07¢)

TSX 12,603.09 (+0.91)

OIL $94.14 US (+58¢)

GOLD $1,669.40 US (+$8.80)

Natural gas: $3.38 US (+5¢)
Dow Jones: 13,507.32 (+18.89)

A skyscraper, a cauldron and a ketchup bottle: London museum unveils design prize finalists

Newly built tower The Shard, right, looms over central London in this July photo. The tower, which at 310 metres high is Britain's tallest building, has been nominated for a major design award along with the 2012 Olympic cauldron and a non-stick ketchup bottle. On Monday, London's Design Museum announced contenders for its Designs of the Year prizes in seven categories including architecture, fashion, transport and digital media. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Public health

Coca-Cola tackles obesity debate in U.S. ad campaign

Coca-Cola became one of the world's most powerful brands by equating its soft drinks with happiness. Now, for the first time, it's addressing a growing cloud over the industry: obesity.

The U.S.-based company on Monday will begin airing a two-minute ad during the highest-rated shows on CNN, Fox News and MSNBC in hopes of becoming a stronger voice in the debate over sodas and their impact on public health. The ad lays out Coca-Cola's record of providing drinks with fewer calories over the years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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WHAT WORKOUT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

SHE SAYS...
Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

We're two weeks into the new year and I'm sure many of you have resolved that 2013 is the year you're going to get fit. And hey, if you've actually managed to stick with it so far, then good for you!

But with so many exercise-themed daily deals showing up in your email inbox every morning, it can be hard to know where to begin. Consider this a Coles Notes guide to some of the different workout options available to all those determined resolution-makers out there.

1. **Spinning.** There's nothing quite like cycling away your sins for 45 minutes on a stationary bike in a dark room surrounded by sweaty bodies and loud music thumping in your ears. It's kind of like burning calories in a nightclub except you're pedalling instead of grinding and that water you're chugging doesn't have any vodka in it.

2. **CrossFit.** Once the preferred exercise regime of military personnel and Olympic athletes, CrossFit is now developing a cult-like following among the civilian masses. The high-intensity fitness program emphasizes heavy weightlifting, gruelling cardio and a secret language designed to confuse outsiders. But if you can wrap your head around WODs and AMRAPs, then join a Box and start working on your Fran time.

3. **Yoga.** There's nothing new about this ancient practice that combines strength- and stamina-building poses with meditative breathing exercises. While there are many different varieties of yoga, they all involve contorting and holding your body in a sequence of postures that will test your endurance and flexibility. Before you hit the mat, recognize that you'll have to be able to take yourself seriously while posing like a tree.

4. **Ballet Barre Workout.** If you've ever dreamed about a long, lean dancer's physique, then a ballet-inspired fitness class is a good place to start. You might feel a little more Ugly Duckling than Black Swan as you attempt to plié while performing bicep curls with a weighted ball, but stick with it long enough and you'll end up toned and sculpted and maybe even a little more graceful.

5. **Running.** What's not to love about running? It helps to improve both physical and mental health, it's cheap (once you've invested in a decent pair of shoes), and since it's a solo endeavour you can avoid all of those annoying January Joiners that tend to crowd up other workout classes at this time of year. Pounding the pavement is best experienced when there is actual pavement involved, so forget treadmills that do half the work for you and head outside.

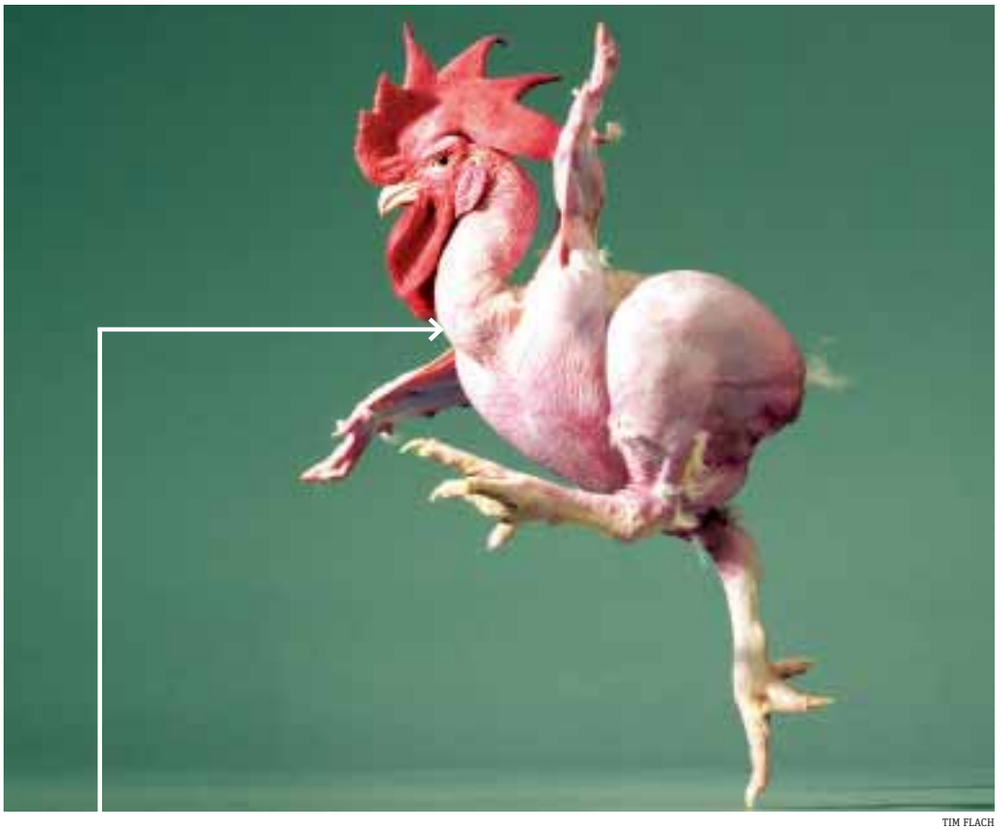
New year, new workout

While there are many different varieties of yoga, they all involve contorting and holding your body in a sequence of postures that will test your endurance and flexibility. Before you hit the mat, recognize that you'll have to be able to take yourself seriously while posing like a tree.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

LPGA player In-Kyung Kim, right, poses in a yoga position in San Diego. Before you ditch your new year's resolutions, consider your options.
EVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

This will ruffle some feathers



TIM FLACH

Cock-a-doodle-doo

Animals' human side laid bare

You may think this rooster has just been plucked but for considerable economic, and potentially environmental, benefits, it has been specially bred by humans to be featherless. In his new book, More Than Human, British photographer Tim Flach explores the striking relationships and similarities between humans and animals. METRO

Q and A

The skin-ny on this yardbird

TIM FLACH
Photographer

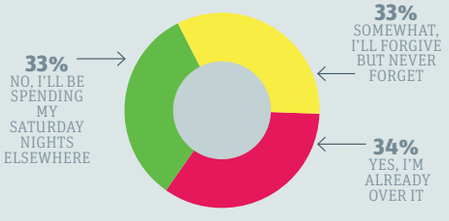
Your book More Than Human looks at intimate portraits of animals. What is the main idea behind it?
Through my photos, I want to spark a debate and raise questions on how we, human beings, shape nature, and conversely how it shapes us. In this regard, I want my photos to go beyond being pretty.

So you invite us to think about how we perceive animals?
Yes, precisely. Let's take the featherless chicken, one of my favourite images from the book. It's bred by Prof. Avigdor Cahaner of Hebrew University of Jerusalem, drawing on a naturally occurring recessive mutation that eliminates feathers. The bird doesn't need to be plucked, which saves money in processing. It provokes a discussion on how we know the animal: In supermarkets, we see them dead, wrapped in cling film. METRO

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Are you willing to forgive the NHL for the lockout?



Twitter

@TheOtherHilary:
My superpower is to make pens stop working. I use it for good, not evil.

@mcouros:
Most of the social unrest in the past 40 years isn't about people wanting to work harder. It's people wanting taxpayers to work harder.

@knownastron:
The bus comes faster when you anxiously watch it coming up the street right? Kind of like watching water boil?

@SaskGregger:
If Amy Poehler was so funny why did Will Arnett leave her? And if Tina Fey was so funny, umm, well someone woulda given her a shot at least

@Heather_Mo:
I may have just given myself food poisoning. If this is true, my dying wish is that you all hug somebody today.

metro
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DVD review

Taken 2

Director. Olivier Megaton

Stars. Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen, Maggie Grace

People will call this a quick-buck sequel to Taken, the surprise hit of 2009, and these people are absolutely correct. Directed by Pierre Morel, Taken took in $225 million in worldwide box office on an investment of $25 million. No surprise then that unsubtle producer/writer Luc Besson decided to hit up the cash register a second time, hiring director Olivier Megaton for the outing.
And the first thing to be kidnapped in Taken 2 is logic. Despite a ludicrous script by Besson and co-writer Robert Mark Kamen, Liam Neeson manages to keep a straight face while reprising his role of avenging ex-CIA dad Bryan Mills. In the first Taken, Mills had to rescue his teenage daughter from Albanian sex traffickers. In Taken 2, it is Mills and his lovely ex-wife, Lenore (Famke Janssen), who are kidnapped. At age 60, Neeson still has formidable action chops and heroic form, and manages to propel the film through a sequel so silly that it seems like a Mad magazine parody of the original.

PETER HOWELL

American Idol judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj both claim they are now getting along. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Idol judges won't sing about feud rumours

Putting it in the past. Judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj are vague on differences, but agree they wouldn't aim to be Idols

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

You might have heard that new American Idol judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj haven't exactly been getting along. That they've been "feuding," even. Well, Carey and Minaj have heard it, too, and they're bored by the reports. "This is a very passionate panel. I think there are a lot of strong personalities," Carey says. "Starting this process, I felt like it was a possibility that there could be differences of opinions. The fighting is what it is. This is American Idol. It's bigger than all that. It's bigger than some stupid, trumped-up thing."

While talk of discord might make for good gossip reporting, it's not good for the show itself, Carey explains. "The whole thing is convoluted," she says. "It's a distraction from the show. It's a distraction to the contestants, and I think it's unfair to them. It should be about the contestants."

But how are the two getting along now? Carey insists that "time heals all wounds" and that the whole disagreement "was sort of one-sided," a contention with which Minaj begs to differ. When asked what they did to put an end to any feuding, Minaj goes for a joking response, saying, "I put out a sex tape." But Carey is much more blunt: "I did nothing, and here we are."

Feud or no feud, the new judges can at least agree on one thing: Neither of them would've tried out for Idol themselves had it been an option. "I personally would never have wanted to do this type of show — no offence to the show at all, but I've said that since I first heard about the show," Carey says.

"I had to learn in front of the world how to just be and be on TV and sing. It's sort of like what these kids do, only at that time it was like the Arsenio Hall Show, and that would be like, 'Here I am!' It was very tough."

For Minaj, her reticence to be a contestant goes beyond just herself. "I definitely don't think a rapper should be in this competition. Rap and hip-hop are completely different from American Idol," she explains.

"With singing, people do not care what you've necessarily gone through. If it's a great song, they're going to love it. I would never go on a show like this as a rapper, and I wouldn't encourage anyone else to come on as a rapper. I don't think it's authentic and I think if you really look for people to believe you and see you as an authentic rapper, you wouldn't do it. It's definitely not a rap competition."

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Demi Moore ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Gimme, gimme Moore: Demi diving into another high-profile relationship

Demi Moore's fledgling romance with 31-year-old restauranteur Harry Morton is reportedly heating up, according to E! News. "They have been trying to keep it a secret," a source says. "It's not a serious thing, but it may develop into something. They have a lot of fun together and have been meeting in secret places in New York and Los Angeles." The pair was recently spotted dining out in Beverly Hills and have reportedly spent several nights together at Moore's home. Morton famously dated Lindsay Lohan in 2006 and has also been linked to Jennifer Aniston.

Jennifer Lawrence

Lawrence lets go of long-term beau

Jennifer Lawrence is now a Golden-Globe-winning actress, but she'll be celebrating solo, as Lawrence and X-Men: First Class co-star Nicholas Hoult have reportedly called it quits, according to Us Weekly. The young stars met on the set of the superhero film and dated for two years. The split comes as a surprise, as Lawrence was singing Hoult's praises recently to Elle magazine. "He is honestly my best friend, and hopefully I'm his best friend, too," she told the magazine. "He's my favourite person to be around and he makes me laugh harder than anybody."

The Word

Jodie Foster's Golden Globes speech decoded

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Jodie Foster, who received the Cecil B. Demille Award for her 47-year-long career in Hollywood, offered an acceptance speech that has left audiences and critics baffled, outraged and inspired in equal measure.

The overall message was unclear. Was she officially coming out? Did she announce her retirement from acting and directing? What does she have against Honey Boo Boo? It didn't help matters that the audio cut out at a crucial moment as she discussed "a big coming out speech." So what did the six-and-a-half-minute ramble actually mean? We set out to decode it:

"I guess I have a sudden urge to say something that I've never really been able to air in public. So, a declaration that I'm a little nervous about but maybe not quite as nervous as my publicist right now, huh Jennifer? But I'm just going to put it out there, right? Loud and proud, right? So I'm going to need your support on this. I am single. Yes I am, I am single. No, I'm kidding, but I'm not really kidding."

TRANSLATION: I recognize your hunger for a big confessional moment from me, and for that I am going to mess with you.

"Now I'm told, apparently, that every celebrity is expected to honour the details of their private life with a press conference, a fragrance and a prime-time reality show. You know, you guys might be surprised, but I am not Honey Boo Boo Child. No, I'm sorry, that's just not me. It never was and it never will be."

TRANSLATION: I am going to equate being upfront about your sexuality with the more tasteless and tacky aspects of our reality TV culture, no matter how damaging it may be for young gays and lesbians to see a successful public figure refuse to say the word "lesbian."

"There is no way I could ever stand here without acknowledging one of the deepest loves of my life, my heroic co-parent, my ex-partner in love but righteous soul sister in life, my confessor, ski buddy, consigliere, most beloved BFF of 20 years, Cydney Bernard. Thank you, Cyd. I am so proud of our modern family."

TRANSLATION: I was in a long-term relationship with a woman, and we have two children together. This is not necessarily news, but it's the first time I've acknowledged her in front of television cameras.

"This feels like the end of one era and the beginning of something else. Scary and exciting and now what? Well, I may never be up on this stage again, on any stage for that matter."

TRANSLATION: It's difficult not to feel you're in some moment of transition when an organization gives you a lifetime achievement award, even if you're only 50 years old.

Harry Styles

Taylor Swift

Brace yourself for another breakup tune

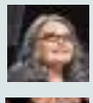
Consider this fair warning, Harry Styles. In the wake of her split from the One Direction member, Taylor Swift posted this ominous message to her Twitter account: "Back in the studio. Uh oh..." Swift has made a career of penning autobiographical tunes of heartbreak, often embarrassing ex-boyfriends like John Mayer and Jake Gyllenhaal. And a Styles number may be a doozy, as Swift was reportedly left heartbroken by the Brit, who dumped her during a Caribbean vacation because he said she's "asexual and wouldn't put out," a source tells Radar Online.

Josh Brolin

Brolin's boyhood was far from boring

Josh Brolin doesn't pull any punches when discussing his rough-and-tumble youth as the son of actor James Brolin, telling Men's Journal that he lost his virginity at 11, joined a surf gang called the Cito Rats and even got involved with heroin. "I was the last (gang member) to get into heroin — I smoked it — and the first to get out. I was around 16 or 17, so it was around the time of the Goonies," Josh tells the magazine. "But I liked working and learning, so it was very difficult for me to lend myself to that drug completely."

Twitter



@TheRealRoseanne
Ben Affleck is a moronic large sweaty headed blowhard.

@EmmaBunton
Wow its snowing where I am, coming down thick and fast!!

@MatthewPerry
This turning down the role of Lincoln is just going to keep kicking my ass isn't it?!?

@OfficialAdele
I just met Daniel f---ing Day Lewis!!!

Kelly Osbourne on losing weight, gaining confidence

Interview. The young starlet speaks to Metro about how she got motivated and transformed her life

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

Kelly Osbourne lost 70 pounds and transformed her life. HANDOUT

After appearing on Dancing with the Stars in 2009, you lost 70 pounds, going from a size 14 to a size 2. Which body part were you most excited to rediscover?
For me, because of my family's history with cancer, my mum is always like, have you checked your boobs? One day, I was doing a breast self-examination and found this lump. So I went to the doctor and he said, "Kelly, that's your rib!" I was like, "Oh my God, I have a rib!"

Which part did you go from hating to loving?
My legs. I didn't realize how much muscle I had underneath the fat, and (I have) some pretty toned legs. Now, athletes always come up to me and say, "You've got great legs." Men like big calf muscles on themselves, so when they see it on a girl they like it.

All girls have fat days. How do you cope with yours?
I look at old pictures of myself. I know this sounds really narcissistic, but I don't mean it that way — it helps me see how far I've come and where I don't want to go again. It gives me that kick in the butt to get in the gym or call up a friend and say, "I'm having a fat day."

How do you feel when you see old photos of yourself?
It's a mixture of a million emotions. It makes me feel really sad that I let myself get like that. It was my own doing. I made myself that way because I was scared.

Scared of what?
Of myself and what I was capable of. Being famous for really not doing anything and having the entire world judging you. But now I'm 28 years old and I see it as a learning curve.

Can you imagine some people saying: The new Kelly is boring. There's a lot of stylish, good-looking women out there, so why do we need one more without edge?
I say, "f— you" because if you want to watch a train wreck, there are other Hollywood starlets doing that for you. I want to be a dignified grown-up. I'll always be me. I'm just not an asshole anymore.

Growth spurt

"I got taught proper posture through dancing, yoga and Pilates and I actually grew an inch. I'm now five foot two.
Kelly Osbourne

Bonus round

On her brother Jack

How did you react when you found out your 26-year-old brother, Jack, had multiple sclerosis?
Are you crazy? He's my baby brother, how do you think I reacted? It's like it's not there. He doesn't want to be treated like a sick person, because he's not sick. It's not a death sentence. He's got a very military state of mind so he looks after himself, eats very healthy and works out every day.

Did it affect the way you value life?
I've dealt with my mom almost dying of cancer, my dad almost dying in a bike accident and now my brother has MS. There's nothing they can tell me I can't deal with. It's not like you have a choice, it's life.

She tweeted this during our interview.

Healthwise, does she mean what she tweets?

THE TWEET: #DietMyth Food eaten late at night stops you losing weight!

Really?
It depends what you eat! It should be low carb and sugar.

What's your favourite midnight snack?
I'm addicted to turkey burgers with no bun and hummus.

THE TWEET: "Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself."~ Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Is that what Def Leppard meant by Pour Some Sugar on Me?
I have no idea what Def Leppard meant by that! They probably meant suck my d—.

THE TWEET: I really believe that if you start UR week w/ a positive attitude on Monday it'll be way easier 2 fight off negativity the rest of the week!

But what if I hate my job but can't afford to quit?
Plan something for after work so that you've got something to look forward to.

So what do you do when you leave work?
I'm a homebody. I have no reason to go to clubs, talk to boys and get wasted. My boyfriend cooks dinner and we play board games. Sounds boring, but we have fun because no one's looking at us and I don't wake up to a fake story about me.

Fingerling potatoes with salmon raise profile of apps

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

Fingerling potatoes are the newest trend for appetizers and side dishes at parties and restaurants.

They're a great twist on the standard potato. Most large supermarkets and fruit and vegetable shops carry fingerlings.

If you can't find them, use small white potatoes for these Fingerling Potatoes with Herbed Cheese and Smoked Salmon.

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray with cooking oil.

2. Slice the fingerling potatoes in half lengthwise and place skin side down on the baking sheet. Spray them with cooking oil. Bake the potatoes approximately 30 minutes or just until they are tender. Place on a serving dish.

3. Using a small food processor or a whisk, mix both the cheeses with the garlic and pepper until smooth. Stir in the dill.

4. Place a dollop of the mixture on top of each potato and sprinkle with the diced salmon. Serve while still hot.

ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN.

Ingredients

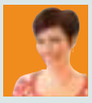
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes

- 8 fingerling potatoes
- 2 tbsp light cream cheese
- 3 tbsp goat cheese
- 1/2 tsp crushed garlic
- pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 2 oz smoked salmon, diced

This recipe serves eight. LORELLA ZANETTI, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

Health Solutions

Casserole reprise



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert, DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Call it a casserole and it's relegated to the '50s, but call it a "strata" or a "bake" or a "pie" and suddenly it's new again.

The traditional formula is simple: ingredients in a glass dish heated in the oven. The outcome is especially good for sharing at parties or for making on the weekend and enjoying all week.

What could use a little healthy push is the choice of items that go into the dish. Your mom used cans of soup, high carb pasta and maybe some Corn Flakes on top, but we can do better. Here are some substitutions to any casserole recipe.

- Canned lentils or cooked chicken instead of ground beef
- Cook and rinse all meat before adding instead of using ground lamb with fat
- Low fat evaporated milk instead of heavy cream sauce
- Spaghetti squash/quinoa/brown rice instead of pasta
- White sauce made with milk instead of grated cheese
- Baby food pureed vegetables instead of canned soup
- Whole wheat bread crumbs instead of Corn Flake topping
- Crushed whole wheat crackers instead of crispy onions
- Phyllo layers instead of pastry or puff pastry

Every casserole has the same formula: Body of protein, heart of creamy and moist and topping of crisp. Mix and match as you please and serve with a great big salad.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM.

Two-Potato Pancake. Tender meets crispy

1. Fill bowl with ice water. Using medium holes on box grater, grate all potatoes, add to ice water and set aside. Use fine holes on grater to grate onion.

2. Drain potatoes well, squeezing out as much water as possible. In bowl, combine potatoes with onion. Squeeze again to remove as much moisture as possible. To do this, grab mix, a handful at a time, squeeze over the sink and transfer to a dry bowl. When all of mix has been squeezed, add eggs, flour and a bit of salt (start with 1/2 teaspoon.) Mix well and set aside.

3. In a large, deep sauté pan over medium-high, heat about 1/4 inch peanut oil to 360 F. To test oil, drop pinch of flour into oil. If ready, flour should sizzle and brown almost immediately. While oil heats, set wire rack over rimmed baking sheet. Heat oven to 350 F.

4. Working in batches and using 3 tablespoons of potato mix per pancake, drop batter into oil. Do not crowd pan. Flatten each with spatula and fry for 4 mins. per side, or until golden and crisp. As you fry, you may need to add oil to pan. Return to temperature between batches and additions of oil.

5. As pancakes finish, transfer to wire rack. Once all pancakes are fried, place them (rack and baking sheet) in oven and heat 5 mins., or until warmed through. To serve, sprinkle lightly with salt and accompany with sour cream and applesauce. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ELIZABETH KARMEL, GRILLING AND SOUTHERN FOODS EXPERT AND AUTHOR OF SOAKED, SLATHERED AND SEASONED.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs baking potatoes (such as russet), peeled
- 1 medium sweet potato (about 1/2 lb), peeled
- 1 small yellow onion
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- Kosher or sea salt
- Peanut oil, for frying
- Sour cream, to serve
- Applesauce, to serve

Sweet potatoes and kale: a match made in heaven

1. Heat the oven to 400 F.

2. Remove outer layer of papery skin from heads of garlic. Slice off 1/4 inch from narrow end of each. Place each, cut side up, on square of heavy-duty foil. Drizzle with olive oil then sprinkle with salt. Wrap foil loosely up and over garlic heads, roast 1 hour. Remove and let cool.

3. Meanwhile, prick sweet potatoes with fork, then rub with oil. Add to oven and bake for 50 to 60 minutes, or until tender.

Ingredients

- 3 heads garlic
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, room temperature
- Pinch dried sage
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 1 bunch (5 oz) baby kale
- 1/2 cup grated fontina cheese
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 to 1 cup shredded white cheddar or Gruyère cheese
- 3 tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds (optional)
- Roasted chicken (optional)

4. Once garlic has cooled enough to handle, remove cloves from skins. Most efficient way to do this is to squeeze whole head from bottom. In food processor, combine garlic, butter, sage and a pinch of salt, then pulse until chopped and combined. Set aside.

5. 15 minutes before potatoes have finished, in a medium sauté pan over medium-high, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add the shallot and sauté until soft, about 4 minutes. Add the kale, and sauté for a few minutes, stirring constantly, until tender. Set aside.

6. When potatoes have finished baking, remove them from the oven and let them cool until easy to touch. Leave the oven on. Cut the potatoes lengthwise down the middle and scoop out about half of the flesh from each, making sure to keep a thick layer of sweet potato within the skin so that it can stand on its own.

This recipe serves eight. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

7. In bowl, mash sweet potato, roasted garlic mixture and fontina cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

8. Divide filling between each potato, spooning it into the shell of each. Top with shredded cheese, hot sautéed kale.

9. Arrange the potatoes on a baking sheet and return to the oven until hot, about 15 minutes. They also can be microwaved for 2 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with pumpkin seeds and chicken, if desired. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ELIZABETH KARMEL, A GRILLING AND SOUTHERN FOODS EXPERT AND AUTHOR OF SOAKED, SLATHERED AND SEASONED.

Avoid boasting

Self praise is no praise

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Earlier this month I was having lunch at a little café in Toronto when a group of four men and two women sat down beside us. Everyone at that table was in a good mood, and as a young group in their late 20s, were enjoying an extended lunch break from work.

What surprised me was how the four men were trying to impress the two ladies, with each gentleman trying to outdo the other with stories of his family Christmas and the extravagant gifts he received.

None of the men in the group seemed to be paying any attention to the women, who couldn't have cared less about the boasting.

The ladies were rolling their eyes amongst themselves.

So as the holiday season comes to an end and we start a fresh, clean new year, remember to think and be aware of others around you when you speak. Sadly, these four men were not impressing the ladies. In fact, they did the opposite.

So when speaking at an office luncheon, talk about relevant and fun things.

Just don't draw needless attention to yourself.

Expect lots of eye rolling if you openly boast. ISTOCK

What does 2013 hold for your love life? ISTOCK

The shy type, the sugar baby or the romantic?

See what your star sign says about you. Online dating site Match.com conducts survey to reveal what 2013 may hold for you depending on your astrological identity

Online dating website Match.com recently conducted a survey to see what 2013 may hold for your love life based on your astrological sign.

It estimates more than one third (36 per cent) of single Canadians will make a New Year's Resolution to go on more dates this year.

So what does your sign reveal about the year ahead? Here is the site's findings.

Capricorn: The office romantic
Capricorns are most likely to date someone from their workplace. Sixteen per cent of Capricorn singles have dated someone from the office in the last five years, the highest of any sign.

Aquarius: The sugar baby
Age is just a number for Aquarius, who are the most likely to date someone more than 10 years their senior. A whopping 56 per cent would date someone who is more than a decade older than them.

Pisces: The romantic
Pisces are the most romantic of all signs. An outstanding 66 per cent of Pisces believe in love at first sight.

Aries: The initiator
When it comes to who should pay for a first date, Aries singles are in agreement. Fifty-three per cent believe the person who initiated the date should pay, more than any other sign.

Taurus: The shy type
Taurus singles are the shiest of the signs, with only eight per cent having asked someone out on a date in the last year.

Gemini: The long distance lover
When it comes to romance, Gemini singles are prepared to go the distance. An overwhelming 54 per cent have had a long distance relationship, more than any other sign.

Cancer: The multitasker
If you're dating a Cancer, be prepared to have "the talk" sooner rather than later. While not necessarily ones to cheat, at least one in 10 Cancer singles (11 per cent) date two to three people at the same time. Talk about a scheduling challenge!

Leo: The Facebook updater
It's not official until it's on Facebook! At least according to Leo singles, who are most likely to update their relationship status on the social networking site. Nearly one quarter (21 per cent) report or update their relationship status regularly.

Virgo: The online dater
When it comes to embracing technologies to improve their love life, Virgo singles are most likely to bite the bullet. Nearly half (47 per cent) have used an online dating site.

Libra: The good time
If you're dating a Libra, prepare to imbibe. Libra singles are most likely to drink alcohol on a first date – 74 per cent will have a boozy beverage on a first night out.

Scorpio: The canine cuddler
Are you a dog lover? Then date a Scorpio! Singles with this sign are most likely to be friends to canines. Sixty-three per cent are fans of these furry fellows.

Sagittarius: The sharer
If you're dating a Sagittarius, the odds are your ears should be burning about now. More than a third (36 per cent) of Sagittarians will discuss their dating life with friends and family, bring others out as wingmen or discuss their dating life goals with a group. METRO/MATCH.COM

Is your partner having an online affair?

Internet infidelity. Discreet, sneaky web exchanges only make it easier for 'enormous' number of cheaters in North America

OLIVIA MORROW
Metro World News in New York

The temptation of an online affair is one that many cannot resist, particularly with the prevalence of social media in today's society.

Dr. Janis Abrahms Spring, a renowned clinical psychologist and author of the popular book, After the Affair, recently released a second edition of the self-help book for couples. The updated edition features a section based on what she calls the "new" infidelity, which refers to online affairs.

Spring believes that the number of affairs taking place in America is "enormous" and she predicts that the issue is only going to get worse due to the amount of time people spend online.

"The landscape has changed dramatically, people are spending hours chatting with others," Spring says, "Partners can feel very, very betrayed by these relationships, because affairs at their core are not necessarily about sex but about secrets and the violation of trust."

Spring suggests that couples should talk about what they're comfortable with in terms of how they can communicate with others online. "They've got to be explicit about what constitutes an affair," she says. "If your partner was in the room looking over your shoulder watching what you are reading and what you're writing and they're feeling uncomfortable, you know you're doing something wrong."

Quoted

"You can be anyone you dream of being."

Dr. Janis Abrahms Spring
On one of the reasons why people flirt and begin affairs online

But what is it exactly that makes people want to have an online affair? "You can be anyone you dream of being," Spring says. "This experience of transcending your ordinary self, it's very powerful … it's not complicated by reality." She adds that many unfaithful partners are not necessarily attracted to the person they're communicating with, but rather how the experience makes them feel.

"It's a great rush for the person who's corresponding that way because it allows them to go outside of their normal self."

But is it OK for someone to check their partner's Facebook or emails in order to uncover the truth?

"I understand why people check, it's human nature to check," she says. "People want the truth and they believe they can't get it from their partner."

Who is she always talking to on that thing? Having an affair couldn't be easier these days with the help of social media. ISTOCK

Make 12 money vows for 2013

Alison on Money.
Having trouble keeping financial resolutions? Join the club

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

It's all about the psychology. Twelve months is a long time to keep a money vow. However, if you're only aiming for a month, chances of success are higher, which increases the likelihood that you'll turn some of your mini-resolutions into habits.

Try these on for size in 2013.

January: Find 30 minutes
Devote half an hour a week to your financial affairs. Eliminate distractions and focus.

February: Read a statement
Spend this month getting familiar with your RRSP. Ask questions of your advisor if you don't understand the financial products you hold.

March: Keep a log
Trust me, you have no idea what you really spend. List every last penny in a journal.

April: Set aside
When your tax refund arrives, save some of it in a six-month GIC for the holiday season.

May: Cut it out
Pick a spending habit and toss it for 30 days. If it is food related, say a daily double double and donut, you'll drop a bit of weight too in time for beach weather.

June: Cut it down
With the better weather arriving, consider reducing your cable package.

July: Try shank's mare
Walk everywhere you can. This is harder in the burbs, but rethink your driving habits to save gas and whittle the waist.

August: Donate
During the dog days of summer, pick a charity and set up a monthly donation, much easier than a last minute lump sum.

September: Get educated
Go to Investor Education Fund, (getsmarteraboutmoney.ca), Credit Canada (creditcanada.com) or Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, (fcac-acfc.gc.ca) for great tools and unbiased information.

October: Check it out
Get your credit report and score from equifax.ca or transunion.ca.

November: Stay home
Axe the restaurant, prepared foods and take out habit.

December: You're almost there
Make a list of all you've accomplished financially this year and feel good about yourself.

Customize your own 2013 resolution list and you're sure to stay financially engaged all year round. Happy New Year's to all my readers!

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

Stick to your financial resolutions this year by making manageable goals. ISTOCK IMAGES

To consolidate debt or grin and bear it?

FUN AND FRUGAL
Lesley Scorgie
money@metronews.ca

Besides goals of better eating and weight loss, debt is top of mind for most North Americans this January. Make debt repayment a 2013 goal!

How much do you owe? To whom? What interest rate? Can you afford the payments?

The choice is yours — should you tough debt repayment out the old-fashioned way (regular payments to multiple lenders) or apply for a consolidation loan (one consolidated payment to one lender).

The benefits of a consolidation loan are that the interest rates are typically lower than the combined interest rates of multiple debts, which often consist of high interest credit cards. As such, the monthly payments can be lower.

However, many experts rail against consolidation loans because they don't teach a valuable lesson: Taking full responsibility for debt accumulation.

The act of having to pay off expensive debts the old-fashioned way often imposes enough financial hardship on a person that they change their spending habits.

Canadian statistics show that the majority of individuals with consolidation loans never learn their lesson and are first in line for another one when the previous is finished.

You're a good candidate for a consolidation loan if you are paying too much in interest or if you can't keep up with regular payments.

The first caveat however, is that you must be financially disciplined and commit to making payments on time, in full and not accumulating additional debts. The second is that these loans are difficult to qualify for as most people that are "maxed out" are considered high risk.

Many Canadians turn to lines of credit as pseudo-consolidation loans. Scary!

Though interest rates are attractive, lines of credit are revolving, thus the available borrowing room never decreases. Rarely do Canadians pay off their lines of credit. Rather, they continue to overspend using their line of credit, often decreasing home equity. If you use a line of credit to consolidate, reduce the borrowing limit as you pay it down.

If the temptation to spend is too great or you can't qualify for a lower interest loan, repay your debt the old-fashioned way.

On a spreadsheet, list who you owe money to, the interest rate and balance. Call each lender and negotiate a better rate. Each month, pay a little extra on the highest interest debt until it's paid off.

Then pay extra on the next highest interest debt. Remember, you'll have extra money from your previous debt's regular payment.

Follow Lesley on Twitter @LesleyScorgie

Don't let debt blow you away! ISTOCK IMAGES

NFL

Chiefs' Belcher legally drunk at time of murder-suicide: Report

Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher had a blood-alcohol level of more than twice the legal limit when he shot his girlfriend nine times and then killed himself, an autopsy released Monday showed.

The Jackson County Medical Examiner report on Belcher, 25, raised new questions about whether police should have done more before the Dec. 1 murder-suicide. Officers found Belcher sleeping in his car about five hours earlier, but let him go.

At the time of the autopsy, Belcher's BAC was 0.17, more than twice the limit of 0.08 per cent for Missouri drivers, and it was likely higher when he shot girlfriend Kasandra Perkins, 22, at the couple's Kansas City home.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Centre-fielder Rasmus signs 1-year deal with Blue Jays

The Toronto Blue Jays have avoided salary arbitration with centre-fielder Colby Rasmus, signing the 26-year-old to a one-year contract worth $4.675 million.

Colby Rasmus
GETTY IMAGES FILE

Rasmus hit 23 home runs in 2012 — tying his career high — but also posted a career-worst .223 batting average and .289 on-base percentage.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Anaheim Ducks Ryan Getzlaf, left, and Corey Perry are facing the possibility of being split up in free agency this summer after spending nearly their whole professional careers playing together. HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Ducks duo hope this isn't their swan song

NHL. Perry, Getzlaf prepare for season knowing unrestricted free agency lies ahead

Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf have played together in almost every game of their careers with the Anaheim Ducks, usually on the same line. Perry won an NHL MVP award, Getzlaf became the Ducks' captain and they raised the Stanley Cup together.

With unrestricted free agency looming for both forwards this summer, they don't know what they're heading into during what could be their final few months together.

Perry and Regina native Getzlaf expressed no concern about their contract status when the Ducks opened training camp on Sunday. They're determined to stay focused on fixing the Ducks, who missed the post-season last year.

"Obviously, I don't have a time frame on it, but we'd like to get something done if we can," Getzlaf said. "If both parties are wanting to do that, then it'll get done."

Anaheim general manager Bob Murray opened camp by affirming his strong desire to re-sign Perry, the goal-scoring member of the tandem, and Getzlaf, the Ducks' top playmaker. Anaheim drafted the forwards together in the first round in 2003 and nurtured their emergence.

"It's my top priority," Murray said. "They've been Anaheim Ducks from the start. I love those guys."

But Murray realizes both sides must make tough decisions. While Getzlaf and Perry decide whether they're willing to risk personal upheaval by waiting for unrestricted free agency, the Ducks must figure out how much they're willing to spend on two 27-year-old forwards with top-level talent and disappointing recent results.

Growing up Ducks

Perry and Getzlaf progressed through the Ducks' system together and joined the big club during the 2005-06 season before winning a Stanley Cup in 2007.

Perry won the Hart Trophy in 2011 with 98 points and a league-best 50 goals, but his production fell to 37 goals and 60 points last season. Getzlaf struggled with injuries during part of Perry's MVP campaign, and he returned last season with 57 points and a career-low 11 goals in the worst full season of his NHL career.

Yet even the declining numbers probably wouldn't stop somebody from signing both players to huge contracts. The Ducks aren't eager to risk losing two of their most valuable properties: Both forwards' representatives are scheduled to visit Murray in Anaheim in the near future for contract talks.

"There's no time frame," Perry said. "Whatever happens, happens. I'm not going to be thinking about it. It's not going to be in the front of my mind. I have a job here to do first, and that's to go out and play hockey and help this team win." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Armstrong opened up to Oprah on PEDs: Source

A person familiar with the situation said Lance Armstrong admitted to using performance-enhancing drugs during his cycling career in Monday's interview with Oprah Winfrey. The episode will air on Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Lance Armstrong confessed to Oprah Winfrey during an interview on Monday that he used performance-enhancing drugs to win the Tour de France, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the interview is to be broadcast on Thursday on Winfrey's network.

Armstrong was stripped of all seven Tour titles last year following a U.S. Anti-Doping Agency report that portrayed him as a ruthless competitor, willing to go to any lengths to win the prestigious race.

Livestrong meeting

Armstrong stopped at the Livestrong Foundation, which he founded, on his way to the interview and said "I'm sorry" to staff members.

- A person with knowledge of that session said Armstrong choked up and several employees cried during the visit.

After a federal investigation of the cyclist was dropped without charges being brought last year, USADA stepped in with an investigation of its own. The agency deposed 11 former teammates and accused Armstrong of masterminding a complex and brazen drug program that included steroids, blood boosters and a range of other performance-enhancers.

A group of about 10 close friends and advisers to Armstrong left a downtown Austin, Texas, hotel about three hours after they arrived Monday afternoon for the taping.

Soon afterward, Winfrey tweeted: "Just wrapped with @lancearmstrong More than 2 1/2 hours. He came READY!"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Red Blacks name not hitting home with Ottawa football legend, fans

CFL. Monikers being suggested, but expansion team remains nameless

The latest suggested nickname for Ottawa's CFL expansion franchise isn't doing it for Russ Jackson.

The Ottawa Red Blacks — or RedBlacks as was suggested on Twitter — was being mentioned prominently Monday in social media as a moniker for the CFL club slated to begin play in 2014. Neither was receiving much support from Ottawa football fans and Jackson, who led the Ottawa Rough Riders to three Grey Cup titles over his illustrious 12-year career with the franchise, wasn't big on it either.

"The Red Blacks, to me, seems to get you to a soccer situation," Jackson said. "I don't know of a professional North American football club that's named with just colours, but that seems to be the one that's bouncing around."

Ottawa Rough Riders alumni Russ Jackson hoists the Grey Cup above his head to kick off the fan march before the Grey Cup in Toronto on Nov. 25, 2012. Jackson is hoping Ottawa's expansion team maintains some traditions of the Rough Riders. MICHELLE SIU/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Liverpool, one of the English Premier League's top franchises, is called the Reds because of their red home kits. New Zealand's Test rugby squad became known as the All Blacks in 1905 when switching from white to black shorts to go with its black top during a tour of the British Isles, France and Canada.

The NFL's Cleveland Browns have brown in their colour scheme, but the team is named after former head coach Paul Brown.

Unfortunately, the Ottawa club won't be called Rough Riders. A condition of the city's return to the CFL was the new franchise not use the original team name.

But Jackson, whose No. 12 was retired by his former club, would like to see the franchise maintain some traditions of the Rough Riders, which operated from 1876 to 1996 and won nine Grey Cups.

"I'm hoping they'll keep the colours — the red, white and black — which it sounds like they're going to," the Hamilton, Ont., native said. "I also thought it would be nice if they could maintain ... the big R that was always a symbol of the Rough Riders on the helmets."

It's unclear when the Ottawa franchise will unveil a team name. Time is certainly on its side, but the 76-year-old Jackson said a nickname is important because it can establish a team's identity, on and off the field.

"I think people relate to it," Jackson said. "I never did like the Renegades (which operated in Ottawa from 2002-06), it never did strike me as something that really hit home for me." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Just do it

McIlroy signs with Nike

Rory McIlroy and Tiger Woods are on the same team now — at least when it comes to sponsorship.

McIlroy officially made the switch to the swoosh on Monday as Nike confirmed one of the worst-kept secrets in golf, announcing it had signed a multi-year deal with the top-ranked Northern Irishman.

The deal means Nike now has golf's two biggest names representing its brand, as Woods has been with the sportswear company since turning pro in 1996. Nike did not disclose any financial details of the deal, but industry observers have estimated that McIlroy will be paid up to $20 million a year to use the company's equipment and apparel.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rory McIlroy celebrates winning the PGA Championship on Aug. 12, 2012. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Tennis. Immune-system illness spawns Williams sister's 'Venus A.D.'

Venus Williams has made the dietary leap from steak lover to vegan, but admits that in times of weakness she is a "cheagan."

That's Venus-talk for a cheating vegan.

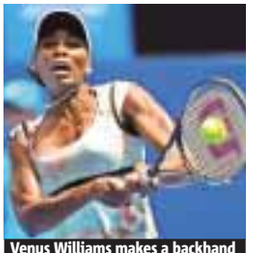
"If it's on your plate, I might get to cheat. If you're sitting next to me, good luck. You turn your head once and your food might be gone," the seven-time Grand Slam winner said, in good spirits after starting her Australian Open campaign Monday with a quick 6-1, 6-0 win over Galina Voskoboeva. "I think it's pretty well known I'm a cheagan. I'm not perfect, but I try."

On her website the 32-year-old American refers to this phase of her life as "Venus A.D." — Venus After Diagnosis.

Food is not the only difference between then and now, but it is one of the big lifestyle changes Williams has made since being diagnosed in 2011 with Sjogren's syndrome, an immune-system illness that had caused her years of mysterious symptoms like shortness of breath, fatigue and muscle pain.

Williams went public with her illness after withdrawing from her second-round match at the 2011 U.S. Open and then took seven months off tennis.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Venus Williams makes a backhand return to Kazakstan's Galina Voskoboeva on Monday. ROB GRIFFITH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Raonic clears first round

Canada's Milos Raonic overcame a shaky start to win his opening match at the Australian Open.

- Raonic dropped the first set but reversed his momentum to score a 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, 7-6 (0) victory over Jan Hajek of the Czech Republic to advance to the second round Tuesday.
- The right-hander from Thornhill, Ont., used his power serve to bomb Hajek with 30 aces in a victory lasting just over two and a half hours.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	24	11	.686	—
New York	24	13	.649	1
Indiana	23	15	.605	2½
Brooklyn	22	15	.595	3
Chicago	21	15	.583	3½
Atlanta	21	16	.568	4
Milwaukee	19	17	.528	5½
Boston	20	17	.541	5
Philadelphia	16	22	.421	9½
Toronto	**14**	**23**	**.378**	**11**
Detroit	14	24	.368	11½
Orlando	13	24	.351	12
Charlotte	9	28	.243	16
Cleveland	9	30	.231	17
Washington	7	28	.200	17

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	29	8	.784	—
L.A. Clippers	29	9	.763	½
San Antonio	29	11	.725	1½
Memphis	24	12	.667	4½
Golden State	23	13	.639	5½
Denver	23	16	.590	7
Houston	21	17	.553	8½
Portland	20	17	.541	9
Utah	20	19	.513	10
Minnesota	16	18	.471	11½
L.A. Lakers	16	21	.432	13
Dallas	15	23	.395	14½
Sacramento	13	24	.351	16
Phoenix	13	26	.333	17
New Orleans	11	26	.297	18

Monday's results
Washington 120 Orlando 91
Boston 100 Charlotte 89
Chicago 97 Atlanta 58
L.A. Clippers 99 Memphis 73
Minnesota at Dallas
Miami at Utah
Oklahoma City at Phoenix
Cleveland at Sacramento
Sunday's results
New York 100 New Orleans 87
Milwaukee 107 **Toronto 96**
Brooklyn 97 Indiana 86
San Antonio 106 Minnesota 88
Denver 116 Golden State 105
Oklahoma City 87 Portland 83
L.A. Lakers 113 Cleveland 93
Tuesday's games — All Times Eastern
New Orleans at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Indiana at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Houston, 8 p.m.
Portland at Denver, 9 p.m.
Milwaukee at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

AHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Portland	37	23	12	1	1	116	106	48
Worcester	37	19	15	1	2	97	110	41
Providence	35	19	14	0	2	88	97	40
Manchester	37	17	16	2	2	102	98	38
St. John's	38	16	20	1	1	92	113	34

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Springfield	35	20	9	3	3	116	85	46
Bridgeport	38	18	16	2	2	121	125	40
Albany	34	14	13	1	6	90	93	35
Connecticut	37	15	18	3	1	98	118	34
Adirondack	35	15	18	1	1	83	100	32

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Syracuse	37	24	8	2	3	131	100	53
Binghamton	35	23	8	1	3	113	86	50
Hershey	38	19	17	1	1	100	92	40
W-B/Scranton	37	17	17	2	1	87	94	37
Norfolk	35	14	18	2	1	87	107	31

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTH DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Toronto	36	22	11	1	2	124	91	47
Lake Erie	39	20	16	2	1	121	121	43
Rochester	36	19	14	2	1	123	112	41
Abbotsford	36	17	12	3	4	81	78	41
Hamilton	36	13	19	1	3	78	115	30

MIDWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Grand Rapids	36	21	11	2	2	113	99	46
Milwaukee	37	17	14	3	3	97	107	40
Rockford	38	19	17	1	1	116	114	40
Chicago	34	17	12	3	2	90	93	39
Peoria	38	17	17	2	2	92	118	38

SOUTH

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Charlotte	39	23	11	2	3	122	98	51
Texas	38	22	11	3	2	102	94	49
Houston	38	18	13	4	3	108	106	43
Oklahoma City	38	18	15	2	3	118	122	41
San Antonio	40	16	20	0	4	100	114	36

Note: Two points awarded for a win, one for an overtime or shootout loss.
Sunday's results
Toronto 2 St. John's 4
Portland 3 Worcester 1
Manchester 1 Providence 2
Bridgeport 5 Albany 4
Connecticut 0 Hershey 5
Texas 3 Oklahoma City 0
Peoria 3 Milwaukee 2 (SO)
Charlotte 2 Houston 1 (OT)

GOLF

PGA

SONY OPEN
At Honolulu, Hawaii
Final Round
Par 70

Russell Henley, $1,008,000	63-63-67-63—256
Tim Clark, $604,800	64-66-66-63—259
Charles Howell III, $324,800	66-64-67-66—263
Scott Langley, $324,800	62-66-65-70—263
Matt Kuchar, $204,400	66-63-70-65—264
Brian Stuard, $204,400	66-68-65-65—264
Chris Kirk, $204,400	68-62-68-66—264
Jeff Overton, $173,600	65-68-67-65—265
Harris English, $145,600	69-69-62-66—266
Marc Leishman, $145,600	67-68-64-67—266
Dicky Pride, $145,600	68-67-64-67—266
Pat Perez, $145,600	68-63-67-68—266
Shane Bertsch, $112,000	69-67-65-66—267
Danny Lee, $112,000	66-66-66-69—267
Josh Teater, $89,600	70-68-65-65—268
Justin Hicks, $89,600	69-68-64-67—268
Scott Piercy, $89,600	64-64-72-68—268
Scott Gardiner, $89,600	68-64-65-71—268
Matt Jones, $89,600	66-68-64-70—268
Webb Simpson, $60,667	66-69-68-66—269
John Rollins, $60,667	68-66-70-65—269
Vijay Singh, $60,667	67-67-68-67—269
Stephen Ames, $60,667	**65-67-70-67—269**
Ricky Barnes, $60,667	70-65-66-68—269
Y.E. Yang, $60,667	70-68-68-63—269
Kevin Streelman, $41,440	71-67-66-66—270
Charlie Wi, $41,440	67-69-69-65—270
Also:	
David Hearn, $33,208	**67-70-66-68—271**
Brad Fritsch, $26,376	**67-70-67-68—272**

NFL

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

SUNDAY'S RESULTS
Atlanta 30 Seattle 28
New England 41 Houston 28
SATURDAY'S RESULTS
Baltimore 38 Denver 35 (2OT)
San Francisco 45 Green Bay 31

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

SUNDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
NFC — San Francisco at Atlanta, 3 p.m.
AFC — Baltimore at New England, 6:30 p.m.

SUPER BOWL

SUNDAY, FEB. 3
At New Orleans
AFC vs. NFC champions, 6 p.m.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Only you know how much effort you have put into a task of some kind, so don't let anyone tell you that you should have done more. In a matter of days, your confidence will receive a much-needed boost. You're doing OK.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If you are serious about a long-term goal then you need to get working on it right now. Even relationships must take a back seat while you make your mark. A job done well will bring you satisfaction.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Your confidence will bloom today and everyone will be impressed by your dynamic manner. In fact, the higher you aim over the next few days, the more likely it is you will succeed. Don't hold back.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Capricorn indicates that major changes are possible, but you must be the one who makes the first move. Yes, mistakes have been made but things are not as bad as they seem.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you feel the need to open up about your feelings, now is the time because you are guaranteed a positive response. In fact, you will be surprised how easy it is to confide in people and how readily they confide in you.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Today's beneficial aspects will reveal new possibilities and make you realize that you have been worrying for no good reason. Chances are you will soon be made the proverbial offer you simply cannot refuse.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
The higher you aim, the more you will accomplish and the more you accomplish, the more you will feel good about yourself. Success and popularity are yours for the taking. It doesn't get much better than this.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Don't sit at home thinking about what might have been. Get out there into the world and do something dynamic. The next few days are going to be crucial to your emotional and mental wellbeing, so be positive.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Cosmic activity in the money area of your chart urges you to try something new, especially if you are not getting as much as you would like from your career. You need to be more adventurous. Is that so hard?

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You can now start moving forward again after a period when you seemed to chop and change and get nowhere. Be brave, be bold and be ready to travel in a new direction over the next few days.

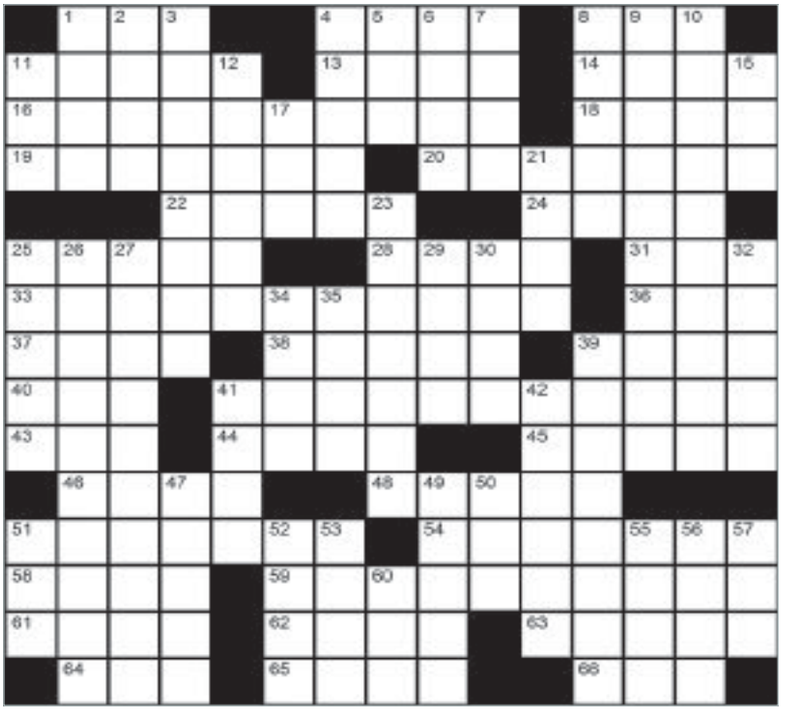
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Believe it or not it is impossible for you to fail. So, the more risks you take now, the more you will achieve. Aim to be the best at what it is you do best. Anything is possible if you want it enough.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may be of the opinion that if you talk tough, you will get what you want. But why risk alienating people when you can just as easily charm them? Say nice things and you will get nice things in return.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across & Down

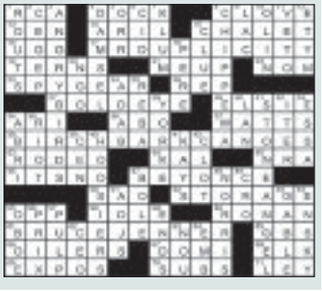
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Great __ Sea
4. __ Breton Island
8. Sleeve
11. Charles Dickens character Edwin
13. Russian river
14. Arctic explorer John, and others
16. Nanaimo-born jazz pianist/singer: 2 wds.
18. Ship's mooring post
19. Ivy's 'grasper'
20. Brickwork
22. Fay of 1933's "King Kong", and others
24. Bread spread
25. Try
28. Director Mr. Preminger
31. Car advertisement fig.
33. Vancouver's urban oasis: 2 wds.
36. Certain ISP
37. Alan of "M*A*S*H"
38. Actress Christine
39. Farm tower
40. Family member
41. Twitter and Facebook: 2 wds.
43. Cobbler's tool
44. Boost
45. Nautical "Stop!"
46. French Polynesia island
48. Panorama
51. "The Flintstones" setting
54. Paris Hilton, for one
58. Organic compound
59. Ancient Roman greeting: 2 wds.
61. Wile E. Coyote's supplier
62. River of Florence
63. Elegance
64. Poetic nightfall
65. Church section
66. Comedy venue, __ Yuk's

Down
1. Soft cheese
2. Welsh actor Mr. Gruffudd
3. 'Ultimate Dinosaurs: Giants from __' at the Royal Ontario Museum
4. Like permed hair
5. Southern constellation near Telescopium
6. "Gilligan's Island" tree
7. "__ Enchanted" (2004)
8. Tree: Spanish
9. Chantal Kreviazuk's hubby: 2 wds.
10. Superman's city
11. Banned pesticide
12. Hockey great Mr. Sittler
15. Farm pen
17. Car company
21. CBC Radio One host, __-Yin Lee
23. Meryl Streep movie, "__ Choice" (1982)
25. Carne __ (Mexican dish)
26. The __. __ Seaway
27. Calgary Flames rink
29. Brit's bye-bye
30. Set of three books, for short
32. Crow
34. H.G. Wells people
35. Chatter, variantly
39. In a harsh way
41. "Begone!"
42. "Flashdance" (1983) song
47. "Over the Rainbow" co-composer Harold
49. Ms. Sevigny
50. Common Market letters
51. Princess Eugenie's sis
52. Canadian figure skater Patrick
53. Ex-Idol judge Ms. DioGuardi
55. Biblical twin
56. Regina's prov.
57. Jr.s' fathers
60. Bill, for short

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

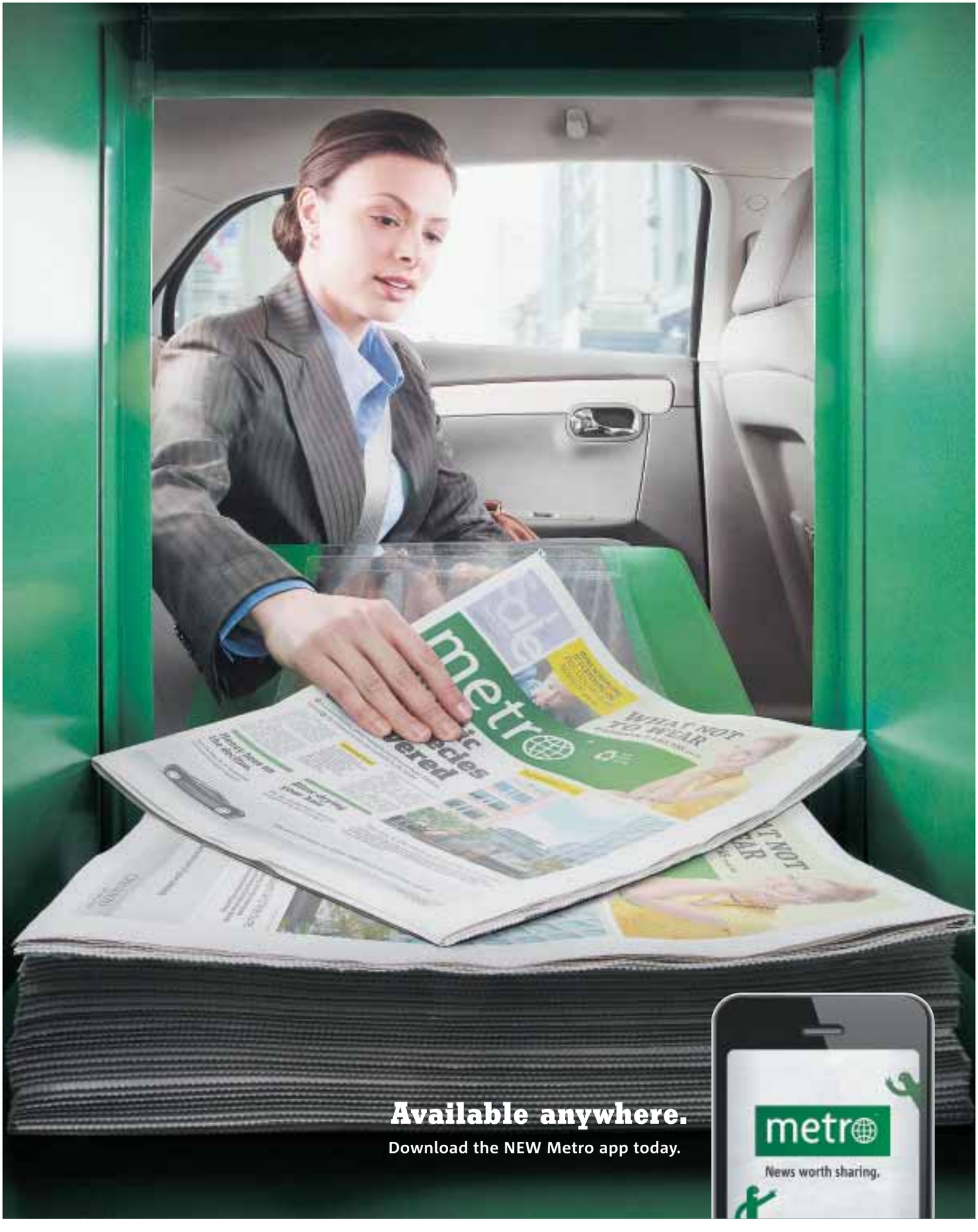
How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

			1	7				9
3						8	7	5
		6					2	
			6	9				7
	2		4		1		3	
5				3	7			
	1					2		
4	5	7						1
8				1	5			

Yesterday's Sudoku

Sharability

easy — hard



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